

VZCZCXRO0392
OO RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHSB #0258 0850958
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 260958Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4282
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 2725
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 2847
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 1301
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2112
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 2468
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2895
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 5334
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
RHMFISS/EUCOM POLAD VAIHINGEN GE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2014
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000258

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR B.WALCH
DRL FOR N. WILETT
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
ADDIS ABABA FOR ACSS
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR J. HARMON AND L. DOBBINS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/26/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [PHUM](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: ZANU-PF INSIDER ON POLITICS

Classified By: CDA Katherine Dhanani for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

ZANU-PF Minister of Tourism

11. (C) Walter Mzembi, ZANU-PF Minister of Tourism, spoke with us on March 20. Mzembi is considered a "young Turk" within the party. He is close to Mugabe, but at the same time is one of the few ZANU-PF officials who has been confident enough to speak openly with us without fear of repercussions from hardliners. Following are Mzembi's observations:

12. (C) Mugabe will not step down at the ZANU-PF conference in December. He is aware of the divisions within the party and is afraid the party will fall apart in his absence. He will not support either Emmerson Mnangagwa or Joice Mujuru to succeed him but is fostering a stalemate between the two with the hope that a younger successor will emerge.

13. (C) Neither Mnangagwa nor Mujuru can win an election against the MDC. If ZANU-PF is to win the next election, it will need to divorce itself from the past and develop new, younger leadership. It is unlikely elections will take place in the next two years; ZANU-PF needs time to regroup and settle the succession issue.

14. (C) ZANU-PF officials are fixated on the lifting of sanctions; they need to understand, however, that the lifting of sanctions will be a more complicated process than was their imposition and should focus on other issues.

15. (C) MDC ministers have been weak in cabinet and reluctant to broach the discussion of major issues. The prominent exceptions are Minister of Finance Tendai Biti, Minister of Economic Development Elton Mangoma, and Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara. (NOTE: Subsequent to this conversation, the MDC directly tackled the land issue in Parliament (Septel) END NOTE.)

16. (C) Tourism can be quickly turned around to begin

bringing in more badly-needed forex. Lifting of travel advisories would be extremely important in accomplishing this.

¶7. (C) Continuing farm invasions are unfortunate and unhelpful to tourism. The Ministers of Home Affairs should take the lead in forestalling invasions and arresting those who participate. The MDC now has a Home Affairs minister (Giles Mutsekwa), but he has not yet been vocal on the land invasion issue.

COMMENT

¶8. (C) In August, Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe referred to his cabinet as "the worst in history." Nevertheless, he recycled many members of that cabinet into the current one. Mzembi and Minister of Environment Francis Nhema are considered the only moderates, although a few others, including Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nicholas Goche and Vice President Joice Mujuru, have signaled they may play, at least on some issues, constructive roles. We have requested appointments with key ZANU-PF ministers and will test ZANU-PF's professed willingness to engage diplomatically.

DHANANI